



**15th MEETING OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE
ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION**
Santiago, 28th November – 1st December 2016

**STATEMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
ON CLEARANCE**

Thank you Mr./Ms. Coordinator.

Mine Clearance in 2016

In the period from January 1 to October 31 2016, the implementation of demining, technical survey, non-technical survey and supplementary non-technical survey activities resulted in the reduction of suspected hazardous area (SHA) on the territory of Croatia of 33.9 km² in size, or 39.3% in comparison to the totally planned for 2016.

In the same period, 30.7 km² of land was cleared by demining activities, or 49.3% compared to the total planned for 2016. Accordingly, during the execution of demining activities, 1.605 pieces of mines and 1.899 pieces of unexploded ordnance (UXO) were found and destroyed.

In the period from January 1 to October 31 2016, the implementation of the technical survey resulted with the decrease of the SHA by 1.39 km², while non-technical and supplementary non-technical survey resulted with the decrease of 1.77 km², so a total reduction of SHA, by implementing the mentioned survey activities was 3.2 km², which is 13.2% compared to the value planned in 2016.

Furthermore, during 2016 the implementation of the non-technical survey in order to update the SHA and for the preparation of preliminary plans for demining, according to new data obtained during the year, the Croatian Mine Action Centre (CROMAC) included new SHA amounting to 1.82 km² within nine mine-affected counties.

These results were achieved with 46 demining companies, 661 deminers, 79 auxiliary workers, 705 metal detectors, 58 demining machines and 42 mine detection dogs.

On January 1 2016, the SHA in Croatia was marked with 13.274 signs indicating mine danger and possible discovery of UXO, that were positioned within the 69 cities and municipalities in nine counties, which statistically means almost 28 signs per square kilometer of SHA. On October 31, 2016, SHA is marked with 14.001 mine danger signs which are placed within the 67 cities and municipalities in 9 counties, statistically presented as 32 boards per square kilometer of SHA.

The Annual Demining Plan for 2016 which totals around 68 million €, is being realized using the following funding sources: the State Budget, legal entities and state administration institutions, EU funds and donations. I would like to emphasize that, for the second year in a row, in 2016 funds acquired for the demining operations gathered from other sources surpassed the ones from the State Budget which until 2015 accounted for more than 60% of the total funds spent for mine clearance operations from 1998 – 2014. In 2016 EU funds again had the biggest financing share with 62% of total funds spent and contracted; meanwhile, the State Budget 32%, legal entities and state administration institutions 4%, donations 2%.

Finally, the Bylaw on the Method of Conducting Demining Operations, Quality Control, General and Technical Survey and Marking of Suspected Hazardous Area entered into force in May 2016. This main Bylaw for humanitarian demining in Croatia prescribes the manner of performing activities of general survey - analysis of suspected hazardous areas, additional general survey, technical survey, mine clearance, marking of mine suspected area, determining of safety distance, protective equipment and the conditions for its use, first aid and medical care, the manner of controlling quality and final quality control and conditions for additional mine clearance – and is foreseen to further improve and enhance mine clearance activities in Croatia.

Mine Risk Education Activities in 2016

Concerning mine risk education (MRE) activities, in the period from January 1 to October 31 2016, throughout 55 activities, more than 18.878 people were informed and educated. Trainings were held in 12 counties, City of Zagreb and in 38 towns or municipalities. Moreover, in March 2016, the first working meeting of all entities and subjects that are involved in providing MRE was held under the coordinating role of the Government Office for Mine Action (GOMA) while the second meeting is planned for the first half of December 2016.

Mine Incidents in 2016

Even though we haven't had civilian mine victims since 2013 and the last mine incident involving a child took place in 2004, this year was in a sense more difficult than expected. Thus, we recorded four mine incidents as follows:

1. On January 24 2016, during demining operations on the demining project in the southern part of Croatia, a mine incident occurred in which one auxiliary worker sustained light injuries.
2. On April 15 2016, there was a mine incident during demining operations on the search and demining project in the Lika-Senj County (the most mine-affected county in Croatia), in which three deminers were affected. One deminer was killed, while two others sustained light injuries.
3. On June 9 2016, during demining operations on the demining project in the Lika-Senj County, there was a mine incident in which deminer suffered light injuries.
4. On October 5 2016, there was a mine incident during demining project in the Brod-Posavina County in which a deminer was killed.

In the last eight mine incidents recorded in 2015 and 2016, seven of them involved bounding anti-personnel mine type PROM-1, which is one the most dangerous due to its high sensitivity, instability and lethality. The PROM-1 is particularly difficult to render safe because its fuse becomes unstable after being exposed to weather conditions for several years.

Mr./Ms. Coordinator,

Because of these unfortunate events and due to some other challenges in the Croatian mine action system, it is obvious that mine clearance activities in 2016 are not entirely up to the level we have foreseen. Yet, it is important to stress that the Croatian Government and all involved stakeholders expressed additional sensitivity and determination to finally solve the mine problem and systematize mine action activities so that the main goal and objective - "Croatia without mines" - is still reachable until 2019.

Thank you.